

LUTHERAN WOMAN TODAY

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IN THE CHURCH

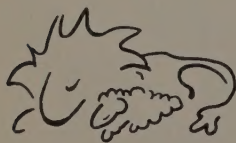
For Growth in Faith and Mission

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Editor:
Nancy J. Stelling

Editorial Specialist:
Sue Edison-Swift

Editorial Secretary:
Renee G. Elms

Production Editor:
Ann Harrington

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CONTRIBUTORS

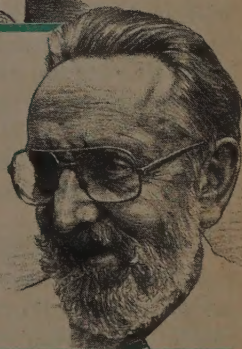
Ma von Craigh knows her ground "in the church" (see 1), having served as a deaconess and pastor in Ohio and Pennsylvania. Formerly an assistant to the bishop in the Central Pennsylvania Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, the Ma von Craigh is currently a team specialist for regional and national work in the Division for Congregational Life of the ELCA.



Carl Reko brings his experience as a career consultant for churches to his article "Too Much Work" (see 26). He has led Options Programs and career planning workshops for church staff. The Rev. Carl Reko is interim pastor of St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Park Ridge, Illinois. He and his wife Ruth live in River Forest, Illinois.



Rev. R. Reece, Akron, Ohio, shares some of his faith-filled insights in "How to Keep a Christian Journal." The Rev. Reece has been a teacher, pastor, counselor and director of a social service agency. A free-lance writer since 1985, his work has appeared in 35 Christian publications.



Deborah Alderfer ("Spiritual Journeys"), a Lutheran deaconess and former editor of adult resources for the Lutheran Church in America, has led a number of workshops on spirituality and self-discovery. She now edits *Entree*, an ecumenical campus ministry publication. She says she finds spiritual renewal through prayer and meditation, art, and a wide range of reading, and that she is "lucky to live in a land so full of rich, moist soil."



WHEN GOD MOVES WHO CAN STAND IN THE WAY?



"Never too old to learn." So goes the saying. But "never too old to be converted"? Can we say that?

St. Peter was a mature disciple of Jesus Christ when he experienced another conversion. Peter had left his fishing boat to follow Jesus. Quick and impulsive as Peter was, he was always saying the wrong thing, it seemed, even to the point of denying Jesus when he was on trial.

But Easter changed all that. The risen Christ appeared to him. He experienced the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The power of the preached word was evident in the 3000 believers added to the church in one day. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Peter healed a lame man outside the temple. Yes, it appeared that Peter now had it made—had it "all together."

Yet even Peter, the mature follower of Jesus Christ, needed to be converted—in another way.

We in the church often focus our attention on the conversion of Paul. He was outside the Christian com-

munity when God called him to faith and discipleship, as we read in Acts 9. And that has a drama all its own.

But Peter, though in the church and already a believer, also needed to be converted. And in Acts 10:11 we read of Peter's marvelous discovery that the gospel of Jesus Christ is meant for all people.

God initiates Peter's conversion through a trance. The heavens are opened and all kinds of animals, reptiles and birds come in a great sheet down to the earth. A voice says, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat." When Peter refuses to do so because that would mean violating dietary laws, the voice says, "What God has cleansed, you must not call common."

At first Peter does not understand what the voice means. But when messengers bring Peter to Cornelius, a Roman centurion, Peter begins to understand: "God has shown me that I should not call anyone common or unclean."

Thus Peter begins a ministry to the Gentiles.

But God is not yet finished with Peter. Peter begins to share the gospel with Cornelius. In the middle of the sermon, God pours out the



oly Spirit upon all the hearers.
then baptizes even these Gen-

l God is not yet finished. Peter
is to the apostolic community
Jerusalem and receives some
criticism. He recounts the
sequence of events and sum-
marizes his experience: "If God gave
me gift to *them* as he gave to
men we believed in the Lord
Christ, who was I that I could
and God?"

ture, committed followers of
Christ need to recover this ac-
tion of Peter's conversion. The call
to an inclusive church will be in-
creasingly heard—and heeded—as
the overwhelming evidence of
God working in the lives of people

who do not share similar cultural
backgrounds.

If the difference of another person
is used to create a barrier rather
than to praise God for the diversity
of the body of Christ, then more con-
versions like Peter's are needed. God
leads us with imagination and vision
beyond our own. A multicultural
church expects to find God active in
different ways and in different per-
sons. We, like Peter, can realize that
when God moves, who can stand in
the way?

*Gloria Espeseth is pastor at St.
Andrew's Lutheran Church, San
Diego, CA, and a board member of
the ELCA's Commission for Multi-
cultural Ministries.*

**"The call to be an inclusive church
will be increasingly heard—
and heeded—as we see
the overwhelming evidence of God
working in the lives of people who do not
share similar cultural backgrounds."**



IN THE CHURCH

BERTHA VON CRAIGH

The purpose statement of Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a bold, hope-full one. What do we mean when we say we commit ourselves "to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness *in the church*"? More significantly, dare we make such a pledge?

"In the church" would seem to be the easiest of places to fulfill that statement of purpose. After all, the church is the place where we should see—and be—sisters and brothers loving one another, compassionately caring for each other, sharing gifts among the community of the faithful. And if there is any place where a person can become whole, we expect that place to be in the church.

A year ago at the Constituting Convention of Women of the ELCA in Milwaukee, I stood, linked arm in

arm with 3000 sisters and brothers as we sang "Weave Us Together." Sensing the power and promise of the moment, I felt all good things were possible for humanity, especially for those "in the church." For ever brief a time, I had a vision of a new earth, a world of peace and justice.

In the past year, as our new Evangelical Lutheran church has taken shape, there has been rich use of the metaphor of being woven together, creating a tapestry. Congregations all over the ELCA responded to an invitation to create and send to Chicago a thread symbolic of their faith. Now a beautiful, multi-colored wall hanging fills one of the walls of the ELCA churchwide offices, joining our unity in diversity.

I appreciate the tapestry symbolism. But in all honesty I have to admit there is another reality to the metaphor, one that fits even for the

od "in the church." Just as weav-
and tapestries can become un-
led, so too can the people of God.
close-knit tapestry of the church
the people of God can begin to pull
t.

or instance, I know of two congrega-
ons who merged into one. When
voting was done and paperwork
pleted, one last issue remained:
re were the dishes from each
ecessor women's group to be
ed? The decision: there would
e to be two cupboards because
women were not about to
ge" the dishes!



Arenas for Doing

he church" can be the arena
e we "do" the growing, affirm-
supporting, engaging and pro-
ng. That arena may be specifi-
a women's group, or in the fuller
xt of a congregation, the synod,
on, or through a churchwide
In the broadest sense, "in the
h" can be anywhere the bap-
in Christ meet.

e opportunities for different set-
—whether stateside or abroad,
r own culture or in other cul-
—are almost endless. The more
re willing to experience other
gs as "in the church," the great-
l be the possibilities of fulfilling
ommitment. Indeed, the excit-
rt about the church, and about
ng, supporting, affirming, and
g in the church is that the
is everywhere, and we "bump

into" Christians doing faith actions
in the most expected *and* unexpected
places—soup kitchens, the League of
Women Voters, advocacy groups and
more.

Between January and July I trav-
eled thousands of miles, meeting Lu-
therans from Appalachia, from the
midwestern rustbelt, from the East
Coast megapolis and from the inti-
mate and international Synod of Slo-
vaks. In all these places I saw wom-
en and men in the church working
hard at *being* the church. The Holy
Spirit is clearly present as people
struggle with decisions about mis-
sion, stewardship and faithfulness.

"In the church" means not only the
settings and the places where we
find ourselves, but also those rela-
tionships that bind us together.
Those with whom we seek to fulfill
our Women of the ELCA purpose
statement may be found in small
groups in circles, on committees or
commissions, in clusters or confer-
ences, or at synod assemblies. They
may be laity, clergy, young, old, work-
ing, retired, single or married.



Open to Receive

The more we open ourselves to re-
ceive others, especially those differ-
ent from ourselves, the greater the
possibilities of receiving support, af-
firmation and growth. We are very
good at giving. In women's circles
we've come to call it "helping." We

have become so good at it that we find receiving very hard, sometimes even painful. When we have more money, goods, decision-making privileges and apparent advantages than others, receiving—especially receiving from “the least of these”—is difficult.

But learning, in the church, to receive from the despised, the rejected, the marginalized, not only lifts burdens from us, but brings us unexpected blessings. For such sisters and brothers have much to give us, teach us.

There is an element about the Good Samaritan story that we tend to overlook: It was a Samaritan, the despised and rejected of the time, who did the ministering to the one in need. Are we willing not only to “do good” to our neighbors in need, but to be ministered to by those whom we—for whatever reason—despise and reject? It is an important question for each of us to answer.

“In the church” may be where, and among whom, we work to carry out the purpose of Women of the ELCA. Dare we make such a purpose statement? Is such an effort worthwhile? What is the reason for our taking up time and space and energy as a group of women with a common purpose?



The Power of Baptism

We dare, as baptized persons, make this purpose statement in hope and trust *because of the nature of God.*

“In the church” is not only where and with whom. It is also “gathering that occurs when it speaking the gospel that brings people together.”¹ “In the church” is only an *arena* but an *event* when God does unto us in Word and sacraments. “In the church,” at proclamation event, is the announcement that the reign of God in Jesus Christ has begun! The news is good because the crucified Lord lives!

Therefore we dare to make this purpose statement because Jesus is the Christ and this Christ lives in us! We are fully gifted, fully in faith, fully supported, fully engaged, fully whole, fully eternal by what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. Not flowing from all our “fullys,” we are able to express to our eternal life, as we are able.



Construction, not Destruction

“In the church” the barrier of fear erect needs to fall before the good. In that way the unconditional love of God for people may come to fruit. We are not to engage in superiority, kindness or tokenism, nor do deflecting God’s love mean we cannot have disagreements. But there must be creative tension at construction, rather than destruction, of other persons. There is diversity without divisiveness. It can even be conflict which leads to new life.

“In the church” is not two

ds for separate dishes. Rather it
celebration of thanksgiving to
because we have been blessed
so many dishes that we can now
so many more people: People
are hungering and thirsting for
acious God, as well as for a full
l. It is indeed a celebration of
ksgiving to God that we are free
ugh to learn from, and be minis-

tered to, by others around us.

"In the church" is more than an
arena for doing. "In the church" is
more than our relationships. "In the
church" is a sign by what grace we
dare to make this statement.

¹Eric W. Gritsch and Robert W.
Jenson in *Lutheranism* (Fortress,
1976), p. 43.

*As a community of women
created in the image of God,
called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and
empowered by the Holy Spirit,*

*We commit ourselves to
grow in faith,
affirm our gifts,
support one another in our callings,
engage in ministry and action, and
promote healing and wholeness
in the church, the society,
and the world.*

**Purpose Statement,
Women of the ELCA**

SEASON'S BEST
.....
BARBARA KRAEMER CLAUSEN



Halloween—unabashedly secular and raucous. A time to dress up, play with death and horror, overdose on sugar. A children's holiday. Even though Halloween's beginnings are tied to All Saints' Eve, we do not talk about capturing the "true spirit" of Halloween.

For Lutherans, the last days of October also bring Reformation Sunday. Are these two festivals—one sacred, one secular, more than just near each other on the calendar? Perhaps by looking more closely we will find connections between them that will help us grow in the faith. And discover more about safety in growing up, about masks, and even about life in the face of death.

Our daughter Amy has helped me understand these connections a bit. On Halloween day, she donned her freshly-sewn costume and twitched excitedly as I smeared on her a red nose, cheeks and an overdone smile. All the way to Wee Wisdom Preschool she chattered on about what

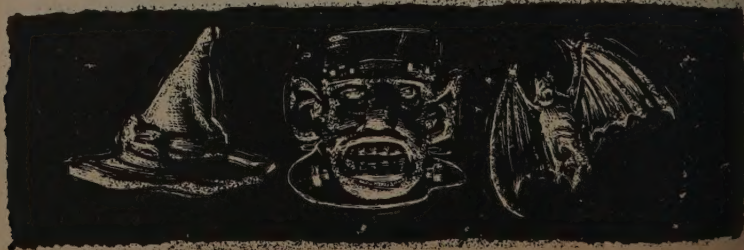
her classmates were going to be: Bird, a ballerina, two ghosts. . . . I at the door she squeezed my hands tightly—for through the large windows she had seen them: weird creatures sitting in stunned silence.

No buoyant "Hi, Amy" today. Those who could huddled near Mr. Dawn and Miss Kathy. Some looked straight ahead or found their shoes unusually interesting. Some took off their masks, and tensions eased a bit. But even at morning's end, the tone was subdued, different from normal preschool day.

During the drive home, my "What was it?" met with a telling pause.

"Well I knew they'd be dressed up. But they looked so different. It was like I didn't know them anymore."

That evening Amy went trick-or-treating for the first time. Not in my mind that there were shadows, no carving pumpkins, rambunctious kids, and news stories of razor blades in apples. She was near home. She was with Daddy. She felt safe.



near home. Safe. Secure in parents' protecting love. Not bad images as adults to grab on to, adults for whom there are still things that go bump in the night. Adults for whom there are still fears, weaknesses, anxieties. We too need to feel that our Father is with us and boldly assert trust in a God who is a safe refuge, our refuge and our strength. Just as the child grows out of trick-treating, so the adult Christian matures in faith. There comes a time to put away childish things—to become independent, take courage, wholeheartedly make a claim as adult member of the body of Christ.

Still, in our growing up, we never give up Halloween, the childhood. And in our spiritual growing, we do not mesh the familiar faith of childhood with our grown-up understandings and spirituality.

Halloween has a lot to do with us. The Scripture lessons for October, on the other hand, talk a lot about being genuine—being the salt of the earth, prophets, advocates of justice, sufferers, partners with sinners, servants, lovers. These are the tasks that call us to childishness but rather to involvement in the reality of the world, even with its puzzling complexity.

Masks allow us to oversimplify, to ignore the greatness and richness of our roles and stereotyped ways of thinking. Perhaps part of what's troubling me about masks is that they distort, and they hide part of who I am. For a while I feel more

sure and put together. But as I identify with various masks—the Wise Woman, the Fragile Female, the Loving Leader, the Perpetually Pleasant Parishioner—I come to believe that those parts of me behind the mask are unacceptable and unknowable and must stay hidden.

But Christ calls us to unmask ourselves. To present ourselves as we are to a God who loves us minus our masks, minus our "tricks and treats." That same God empowers us to die to our old ways and be born again to the new.

Halloween and harvest. Pumpkins galore after the vines die down. Gazing into the glowing coals of Pentecostal fire, we are reminded that in the midst of life we are in death; in the midst of death we are alive.

From this childish, secular holiday, we can learn some things about our grown-up faith. Our childlike trust is combined with an adult response to ministry and action. We are called from behind our masks, loved as we are, and challenged to be genuine. And in the midst of our fear of death, we embrace life eternal. Happy Halloween.

Barbara Kraemer Clausen, South Bend, IN, is a teacher and writer. A graduate of Valparaiso University, she recently received her master's degree in counseling from the University of Notre Dame.



"Church-shopping." I've always disliked that term. It seems to give a materialistic twist to a process that should involve only the spiritual. Yet the term does, somehow, describe the process of seeking the "right" church when we move to a new community or when, for one reason or another, we have become dissatisfied with our present church home.

Churches do vary, sometimes drastically, with the gifts and personalities of their individual pastors and

the individual nature and priorities of the congregations. This is as should be, according to 1 Corinthians 12:5: "And there are varieties of service, but the same Lord."

Ephesians 2:20-22 describes a church, with Christ as the cornerstone, "in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord: in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit." When we "church-shop," we are, in a practical



Church Shopping

Finding a Spiritual Home

CAROL L. HICKS

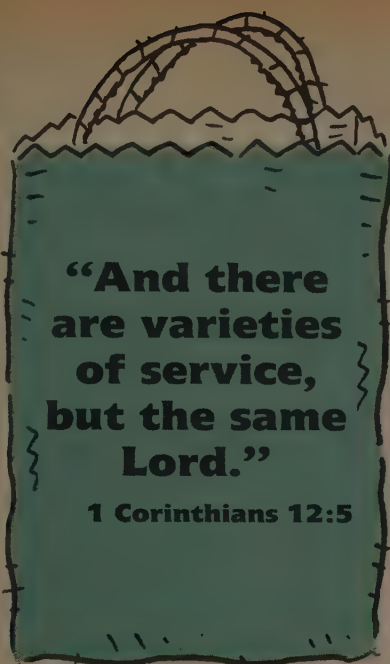
al way, working
th the Spirit, rec-
gnizing our indi-
dual gifts and
eds as we search
a local assembly
at will spiritually
rture those gifts
d fill those needs.
Our church—
d when the fit is
ht, it becomes
st that, *our*
urch—is a spiri-
l family, a home
ere we worship,
d a home base
n which and in
ich we serve.
e choice we
ke can pro-
ndly influence
spiritual life
that of our fam-

It can play a role in determining:
Whether we will grow as Chris-
s or stagnate;
Whether collective worship will be
ally anticipated, or a matter of
igation,” or increasingly neglect-

Whether our service will be in-
ed and constantly renewed in
and joy, or instead become a bur-

Whether we find what we are
ng for may well depend on the
ria we use. As members of the
ngelical Lutheran Church in
rica, we have already made cer-
decisions regarding doctrine, lit-
and traditions. Beyond that, we
aced with questions about what
ecifically important to us as in-
uals within that context.
What is important?

r many of us, warmth and
edliness are a priority. How re-
ve, we ask ourselves on each vis-



it, do the congrega-
tion and its pastor
seem to visitors? Do
the members of this
church care that
I'm here? Or do
they appear to be a
“closed circle”? Or,
worse, does there
seem to be an ab-
sence of caring even
among and for
themselves?

Does the church
provide for the
identification of vis-
itors? Do individual
members reach out
in response to this
identification? How
does a church fol-
low up after a visit,
or two, or three?

An important
consideration is our impression of
the pastor. We listen to his or her ser-
mon (allowing for the possibility of
an “off” Sunday) to determine wheth-
er it speaks to *us*, whether it is rele-
vant and inspiring. We tend to form
additional impressions as he or she
leads the service and greets us as we
leave the sanctuary. “Is this someone
to whom I could turn in a time of per-
sonal crisis? How well would we re-
late to each other?” (First impres-
sions are important, but such
judgments should, in fairness, be re-
served for private conference.)

A pastor once advised me to seek
a church in which I was needed. I
found this excellent advice, since ser-
vice also depends upon finding a
niche to fill, seeking a function to per-
form. A functional family, whether
church or immediate, is interrelated:
sharing responsibilities, working to-
gether, spending time together. In
service, love and strength abound

and grow stronger.

It is most important that our choice of church home reflect our understanding of our own personal calling, our ministry.

Also, other factors may influence our choice:

- The size of the congregation, (remembering there are large churches that, because of their organization, have the feel of a small church, and small churches that, because of their dynamic leadership, accomplish as much as larger churches.)
- The accessibility of pastoral care.
- The types and times of Bible study classes.
- Social ministry programs, evangelism programs or lay ministry programs.
- The inclusiveness of the church.
- The age range of the congregation.
- Youth programs.
- Service alternatives.
- Location. (Although I know people

who travel some distance to attend and serve their church.)

There is another, less tangible consideration. Some might call it intuition: the feeling that *this* is the right one, *this* is home, or that it is *not*. Thomas Merton wrote in *Thoughts in Solitude* (Peter Smith Publishing, 1983): "It would be absurd to suppose that because emotion sometimes interferes with reason, that it therefore has no place in the spiritual life. Christianity is not stoicism. The Cross does not sanctify us by destroying human feeling."

We can approach this emotional element in two ways. While it is important to feel at home in a church, that feeling can come with time and with involved membership. Merton went on to say that God has given us the ability to think for ourselves, make choices and decisions. We do not get led astray in choosing a church solely on the basis of feeling.

THE INVITING CHURCH:

A Study of New Member Assimilation

Roy M. Oswald and Speed B. Leas
(The Alban Institute, 113 pp.).

This report of the Alban Institute studies 16 growing East Coast churches, all mainline Protestant (including Lutheran) and located in stable communities. Researchers interviewed newcomers to the church, clergy, and key congregational leaders. In addition, the authors reviewed much church growth literature and the advice which the institute has given church leaders in recent years.

Most people, according to the authors, are brought into the church by the quality of what they find there and the degree to which the church is a committed community of be-

Still, the emotional response to a church is a useful ingredient in selection. It may be that such a feeling is a response to our prayers for guidance.

The main difficulty with "church-shopping" is that it takes time, and a long, drawn-out procedure can lead to frustration. We may become impatient to join a church and begin the process of assimilation into our new community, a process we know will take still more time.

We may be tempted to settle for anonymous attendance at worship services in the first church we encounter, or the closest. While such an approach may work, research shows a high drop-out rate among uncommitted members of churches.

There is another, less tangible, consideration. Some might call it intuition: the feeling that *this* is the right one, *this* is home, or that it is not.

Considering what we are "shopping" for—a spiritual home base from which and in which to serve the church universal—it is worth the effort, time, and prayer to make a wise selection.

Carol L. Hicks is a free-lance writer who recently moved with her husband from Hartville, Ohio, to the Chicago area. She is currently working on a spiritually oriented book entitled Chumgidi.

"This does not mean that the intuition turns its back on recruiting and attracting. Rather it means that the church should primarily attend to its main business of worship, education, and service and put further down the list of its priorities various kinds of marketing and salesmanship."

Keeping that in perspective, this book is nonetheless an excellent overview of a variety of means of attracting and keeping new members. Assimilation works best . . . where there is enough of a match initially so that [an] attraction exists [between the joiner and the congregation]. But there also needs to be room to grow, to be changed, to be challenged."

—The Rev. Michael R. Rothaar

[Find or order books reviewed in LWT at your local bookstore or nearest Augsburg Fortress location. The Inviting Church can be ordered directly from the Alban Institute, 4125 Nebraska Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20016. Include \$8.25 plus \$2.20 postage with order.]



Putting Down Church Roots

FREDERICK K. WENTZ

Donna and Greg Barmore and their children face an unusual challenge. Greg's work requires him to move every two or three years, and so they find themselves recurringly "in transition."

Donna and Greg believe strongly in the role of a church home in their lives. They need it. And they want their three daughters—presently aged 10 to 17—to participate in a solid, meaningful church life.

They are succeeding in their goal, though not without pain and effort. By the third family move a strategy had developed. How do the Barmores do it?

Well, they don't visit around in various churches for two years, or even two months.

Nor do they join a church, attending worship and Sunday school, and stay on the edges of church life.

Instead they proactively—and quickly—look for certain things; make their commitment to a congregation within several weeks; then pitch in as opportunity offers. They do all this with a well orchestrated

plan that works well for them.

"Within a 15-mile radius of home we look for a Lutheran congregation," Donna Barmore explained in an interview. When they came to Johnson County (Kansas) suburbs of Kansas City, Missouri, this approach provided them with 8 to 10 different congregations to explore.

Right away Donna and Greg started to visit congregations. The girls were invited, but they did not always come along. This initial step was completely a parental one.

"We looked for about six features in the following order," Donna said. First was an active youth program for the youngsters. Second was a good Sunday school program with a stimulating adult class. Third was warm interaction among members. Next a pastor whose sermons were relevant and who was personal with all the family members. Fourth was an adequate physical plant, and sixth a flexible worship schedule with regular opportunity for receiving communion.

While a large congregation could

assure the Barmores of most of these services, Greg and Donna chose a smaller congregation for at least two seasons: It was easier to become acquainted with those around them, and there was better opportunity for them to move quickly into ministries not interested them. These were essential pluses for a church home of two or three years.

In January 1985 the Barmores joined First Lutheran Church. Cory was already part of the confirmation class, picking up after a two-month gap, and all five were regular in Sunday school and worship attendance. Within a few weeks Suzanne joined the youth group and sat with friends during worship. As it turned out, Greg stayed just two years, the others remaining a half-year longer to finish the school year. The farewell service for them took place in May 1987.

In these two years among the people of First Lutheran they became a key family in its life (and First is a congregation with a wealth of leaders and potential leaders). Suzanne became a leader in the youth group and represented the synod at a national church conference on world hunger. Cory was confirmed and became active in youth programs. Joanna received instruction and took her first communion. Greg served on the witness committee and the council. Then he led the church stewardship campaign the fall before he left. Donna helped organize a parents' group to meet during Sunday evening confirmation sessions, taught Sunday school, and was active in the service committee, leading congregation-wide emphases on world hunger and drug abuse.

Donna says their "policy" for each individual was threefold: 1) "Go with the flow" (that is, be flexible and fit

in); 2) Take at least one volunteer work assignment early on; and 3) Initiate relationships. She quotes the familiar "bloom-where-you-are-planted" line as she recalls this last church experience.

But the blooming isn't always easy when it involves putting down roots rapidly, then tearing them up again before long. Of course, the alternative is to be rootless. And the Barmores have found that familiar patterns of church participation allow a better, even safer, way to push down roots than the workplace or the school. "It helps ground us to our new location."

Yet not without some real pain. Donna points out: "Five of us must make individual readjustments. There are real grief reactions at the loss of friends, activities, and sense of security. We need worship to pull us out of ourselves. Worship helps us to recognize our blessings. It reassures us that we are not alone in this new place.

"It moves us beyond the anger and anxiety when roots are pulled up. It encourages us to pass on our struggles to God and to be assured through Jesus Christ that we are forgiven, even for negative thoughts."

The Barmores are also aware, after repeated transplantings, that the quality of love and friendship found at one place provides self-confidence for seeking quickly similar experiences of warm community at the new place. "We are encouraged to go out and try again," Donna says.

"We are active and responsive to God's gifts; and we are learning, by God's grace, to cope with change."

Frederick K. Wentz, a church historian, author, seminary educator, and pastor, is now retired and lives in Gettysburg, PA.



SPIRITUAL SEEKINGS

KAY SODER-ALDERFER

Molly says that the most important thing in her life is spirituality. She describes her spirituality as a journey toward discovering the love of God. "I was born and raised Lutheran," Molly says. She even began preparation for a career in the church.

She became interested in Eastern thought and religion in graduate school when she heard a swami (Hindu religious leader) from India speak to a campus group. She read more about him and Eastern teachings and five years later went on a two-month spiritual pilgrimage.

"I was overwhelmed by the poverty in India, and yet touched deeply by the wealth of spiritual commitment people had to their religion."

When Molly returned to the United States, she was a devotee. She became a vegetarian and fasted as a religious discipline.

Three years later, Molly made her second spiritual pilgrimage to India. "I was devastated by the second pilgrimage," Molly says. "I still saw the physical poverty, but the spiritual richness of the ashram [religious study center] was tarnished, too. Instead of worshiping and meditating with simplicity and reverence, it seemed like the ashram was filled with people trying to claim they had seen the greatest miracle performed by a swami who had given them the best gift."

For a year, Molly felt spiritual arid. Then she went to a meeting of Friends (Quakers). For nearly two years she attended Friends' meetings, and found the quietude was come.

Then one Sunday about five years ago, Molly attended mass at a Roman Catholic Church. "In a way, I felt I had come full circle. I do know

felt immediately at home." Molly went through membership classes at the church, and today describes herself as a "very contented Catholic."

Molly's spiritual journey has probably been more dramatic than most ours. Yet, her searching is something that many women can identify with.

On behalf of Lutheran Woman Today we approached a number of faith-filled women and asked them some questions about what spirituality is for them and where they go to find spiritual nourishment for their lives. Following are some of their comments.

Ruby, an accountant in her 20s, says, "I am Lutheran by upbringing, but my view of religion has broadened." She worships at a Lutheran church every other week. The other weeks she attends other churches to learn more about their beliefs and practices. Her definition of spirituality is "a full heart" and she finds spiritual renewal in nature.

Julie, in her 30s, is a graduate school student and a Roman Catholic nun. While she proudly claims her long Roman Catholicism, she is quick to point out her appreciation of her parents, "loving, ecumenical marriage. . . . My Mom is Irish Catholic, and my Dad is a Swedish Lutheran."

Julie uses several disciplines to renew her spirituality. "I spend half an hour to an hour each day in private prayer. This time isn't for saying prayers or speaking words; it's simply sitting, being in the presence of God." Julie also meets daily for communal prayer with the small group of Catholic sisters with whom she lives.

Once a year for at least 10 days Julie goes on a directed retreat. "In order for me to really feel refreshed, I

need that much time—it takes me three days just to unwind. Otherwise, the silence and reflection time would be wasted."

Sundra, in her early 40s, is a senior consultant manager and an active Lutheran. She defines spirituality as "living with a given set of ethics that guide most of your life's actions."



"Spirituality is growth tended by a loving Spirit."

"For me to be spiritually recharged I need some solitude. Occasionally I turn to reading something totally unrelated to work—something for fun or aesthetic pleasure."

Jamie, also in her 40s, is a technical services librarian. She proudly



Spirituality is “a full heart.”

declares, “I am an ELCA Lutheran!” She also proudly declares that her Native American roots are essential to her spirituality.

“I believe in a higher being—some call that being ‘God’; I call that being ‘Red Cloud.’ And I also believe in the sacredness of the Earth Mother. I believe there is a master plan, where people and the land and all that lives is connected.”

“Most often when I need spiritual balance I go off alone to hike and camp to get in touch with nature—rocks, earth, sky, trees and sunsets. Other times I may pray alone or call on a support person.”

Maren, administrator of a transition home for women and children, is

also in her 40s. “I was very active in the Lutheran church until the past few years. I understand the Lutheran faith; I’m comfortable attending Lutheran church. But I’ve come to a place in my life where I’m not denominational—I’m very ecumenical.”

“For spiritual renewal I keep a journal, which I have found very powerful for me. I attend spiritual retreats, which are a form of community to me.”

Hattie, in her 50s, describes herself as “a homemaker and professional volunteer.” Born to parents with a Nazarene Church background, she was baptized in the Lutheran church at the age of five and has been an active participant in the Lutheran church ever since.

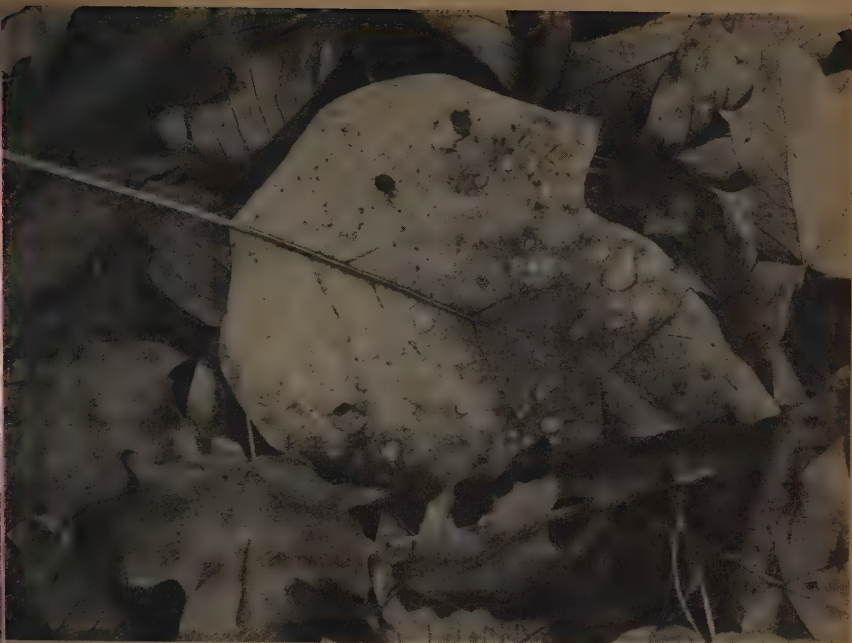
To her spirituality is “a relationship with my God as I see him, and this has been put in me to be used. I described spirituality in one word would be ‘embodiment.’”

Hattie receives spiritual support from Al-Anon, where she finds a group that “speaks of hope, not gloom and doom.”

Lola, a project manager in her 50s, is a lifelong Roman Catholic. “Spirituality is my relationship to God. I find renewal by walking, sitting in an empty church, and reminding myself I’m not the Almighty.”

Susan, a registered nurse and homemaker, is 65. She is a lifelong Lutheran who says, “At Pentecost God sent his Spirit—the same spirit that lives in my heart. That’s spirituality—it’s something you can’t see but feel and live by.” Prayer is Susan’s source of spiritual renewal.

Catherine, 70, is a homemaker as well as a part-time volunteer. While she is a lifelong Lutheran, she is also an “ecumenical Protestant Christian.”



Spirituality in one word: “embodiment.”

“I hear the word ‘spirituality’ a lot, but I don’t hear it defined. Words come and go. I guess spirituality is ‘reaching the soul’ and a reaffirmation of Christian spirit.”

“For spiritual renewal I find a lot in my family—especially when we gather to celebrate together or comfort one another. I also listen to music, read books and psalms, do Bible study, and worship. I get renewed by listening to the ideas of younger people, meeting with my circle, and taking trips to wilderness areas.”

A deaconess in her 80s, now retired after serving several church-related institutions, joyfully describes herself as “a Lutheran with a long life,” rather than a lifelong Lutheran. I used to think the important things in a spiritual life were disci-

plines—daily chapel, daily devotion, daily prayer. And, did I pray! For everyone I knew who was sick, for gifts of strength and wisdom, the list went on and on. Then one day I woke up and I thought, “Boy, if I were God I’d sure be bored by all that. So, I started simply. Each prayer began with ‘thank you.’ At first that little change was hard, but each day it got easier and easier. I still go to chapel and read Scripture daily, but those are thankful opportunities, too.”

“If I had only one thing to say about spirituality, it would be this: Just when you think you know what spirituality is, look out! Because we’re always growing, and that’s what spirituality is—growth tended by a loving Spirit.”

Works of Beauty and Betrayal

Bible Basis: Mark 14:1-52

Study Text: Mark 14:1-11

■ Janet checked the mail when she got home. Among the advertising, she found a personal letter. It was the anticipated invitation to her niece's wedding. Though she loved all her nieces and nephews, this niece was her favorite, so Janet read the invitation with pleasure. After the usual announcement of time and place, there was this small paragraph:

The bride and groom request that you give them no wedding gift, but instead make a contribution to your church or favorite charity. Or, if you prefer, bring a gift that they can give to the needy.

■ Janet didn't know how she felt about this request. She had already chosen a wonderful—if somewhat extravagant—gift for this favorite niece. As she thought about it she realized that she wanted her niece to have this gift in her home, to use, but mostly to be a reminder of her aunt's love for her. On the other hand, she respected her niece and her niece's desire to help others. Janet was in a quandary about what to do.

■ Discuss this situation. How do you respond to the request of Janet's niece and her future husband? How do you respond to Janet's predicament? What would you do if you were Janet?

Read Mark 14:1-52 or Mark 14:1-11



A Woman's Extravagance

In Mark's gospel, it is now the fourth day of Passion Week (14:1). Mark tells us in 14:1 that two days remain until the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. During Passover, Jews came to Jerusalem to celebrate the night the Lord "passed over" their ancestors' homes, saving their first-born from death, and delivering them from slavery in Egypt. The Festival of Unleavened Bread, a seven-day feast after Passover, commemorated the hasty flight of the Jews from Egypt: they had no time to wait for the bread to rise, so they took with them unleavened bread (see Exodus 12:1-10).

On this day, Jesus is in Bethany at the home of Simon the leper. Review Mark 14:3-9 and respond to the following questions:

What does the woman do?

How do some people respond to the woman's action?

3 In light of the fact that the anointer the woman poured over Jesus was worth a whole year's wages for a laborer, how do you respond to the woman's action?

4 What does Jesus say the woman's action means to him?

5 Recall that *Messiah* means "anointed one." With this in mind, what do you think the woman is saying with her action?

■ Like the poor widow who extravagantly gave two coins at the Temple (Mark 12:41-44), this woman, too, gives extravagantly—an entire flask of costly nard. Jesus calls her action “a beautiful thing” (14:6). In Greek, the phrase word is “a beautiful work.” This is the same word that Jesus uses in 13:34, when he tells a parable about a man, going on a journey, who leaves his servants in charge, each with their “work” to do in his absence.

■ According to Jesus, this woman’s extravagant action is her “work,” her ministry, her calling in this life. Each of us, Jesus says, has work to do in this life while the householder is away. And when we do our work, it is “beautiful,” says Jesus.

6 What is your “work” that you are to be about, your ministry, your calling as a disciple of Jesus?

can you better appreciate the beautiful works done by you and others?

8 When are you extravagant in your relationship with Jesus and others? Are there ways you want to be more extravagant?

9 This anonymous woman is foremother whose work can inspire and guide us. Who are the women of previous generations, the foremothers, whose work has inspired and guided you?

7 Often, in our own and others’ work, at home and in our congregations, we fail to see the beauty of the work. Instead, we take it for granted or, at times, are even critical of it, like some of the people in this story. How

A Patchwork of Ironies

We have described Mark as a quilt. His stories are set beside one another just like patches of material in a quilt. When we study these stories in relation to one another, their design emerges and we can see more of the whole story of Mark. Let's study the patchwork design of Mark 14:1-52.

We have read Mark 14:3-9, which tells about a work of beauty. Note stories that surround it. Read Mark 14:1-2 and 10-11. What kind of work do they describe?

Read Mark 14:17-19 and 31. In Greek, the question in 14:19 has more the sense of, "Surely it is not I?" (and anticipates a negative response). What do the disciples vow? Read Mark 14:50. What do the disciples do a few hours later?

3 Read Mark 13:33-37. What is Jesus' emphatic message to the disciples? Read Mark 14:34. Again, what does Jesus say to the disciples? Read Mark 14:35-41. What do the disciples do?

4 Read Mark 14:26-31. What does Peter vow? Read Mark 14:50 and 72. What does Peter do?

5 Read Mark 14:44-45. Judas says that he will kiss Jesus as a sign (14:44): it was common for disciples to kiss their rabbi. When he does kiss Jesus (14:45), a different Greek word is used, one that describes a lover's kiss. What does this "lover's kiss" do?

6 How do all these ironies make Jesus the Messiah look?

is as if they are all dipping their bread into the same dish for, as we have seen, they all betray Jesus. Read Mark 14:22-25. What does Jesus give them in response to this prediction of their betrayal? What do these verses tell about the meaning of the Lord's Supper for us, even as we, too, betray Jesus?

■ Read Mark 14:51-52. These two verses tell a curious story that is both comic and pathetic. It is comic to think of this young man, his captors gripping him by his clothing, unraveling the linen cloth about him, and this young man running away naked. It is also pathetic as yet another follower, unlike Jesus, runs away into the night.

■ This small episode shows how total the disintegration of Jesus' movement is. Deserted by all, Jesus the Messiah goes alone now with his enemies who, at last, have captured him.

Jesus' Response

In Mark 14, Jesus is betrayed by his most intimate friends. He has taught them and trained them to be his disciples. But in the end, when he faces his enemies, his friends desert and deny him. How does Jesus respond to this betrayal?

1 Read Mark 14:17-21. Jesus knows ahead of time that the disciples will betray him. He says that the one dipping his bread with him into the same dish will betray him. But it

2 Read Mark 14:32-34, 37-38 and 14:40-41. Even though the disciples fail Jesus over and over again, how does he respond to them?

Read Psalm 116:12-19, and reflect on the extravagance of the Lord and what it means for you.

Prayer of the day: Maundy Thurs-
day.

Lord God, in a wonderful Sacrament you have left us a memorial of your suffering and death. May this Sacrament of your body and blood so work in us that the way we live will proclaim the redemption you have brought; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen (LBW, p. 20).

To prepare for the next study, "The Tearing of the Curtain," read Mark 14:53–15:47 and reflect on what Jesus' death means for you.

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Notes

TOO MUCH WORK



H. KARL REKO

Workaholism, as an identifiable malady, is of recent vintage. Wayne Oates first coined the term and then defined it in his *Confessions of a Workaholic* (World Publishing Co.), printed in 1971.

Good, Bad, or Neutral

Perhaps because the concept of workaholism is relatively new, we show a great deal of diversity in our reactions to it, treating it with either gravity or humor, depending on our experience with its consequences.

Even some specialists in the field disagree on whether workaholism is good, bad or neutral to those who exemplify it.

Definitions of workaholism sound a bit like definitions of other addictions, such as alcoholism. For instance, Oates defines a workaholic in *Confessions of a Workaholic* as one "whose need for work has become so excessive that it creates noticeable disturbance or interference [in] bodily health, personal happiness

A workaholic is one “whose need for work has become so excessive that it creates noticeable disturbance or interference in bodily health, personal happiness, interpersonal relations, and smooth social functioning.”

s, and interpersonal relations, . . . smooth social functioning.” Informed observers of workaholics are an individual with readily identifiable characteristics. The typical workaholic appears full of energy, intense and driven. She works long hours, anywhere, and expects others to do the same. She feels uncomfortable when not working or doing something she considers productive. Her vacations are working vacations, if taken at all, and hobbies must be productive and pursued vigorously.

The Enemy

A workaholic's opponent is time; since she cannot increase time, her objective is to efficiently pack more and more activity into the same amount of time. But neither increased productivity nor increased rewards from the activity, such as higher salary or recognition, satisfies a workaholic. What's more, “professional volunteers,” as well as unpaid executives, are equally susceptible, because money is not the issue. The addiction is not to the outcome but to the *process* of work itself. Two other analysts, Anne Wilson (author of *Women's Reality*) and Diane Fassel, have studied

workaholism. They define the workaholic as a person for whom work is a compensation for feelings of insecurity or inferiority, and a substitute for personal relationships.

If that picture is true, then the basic malady is common to all of us. God cares enough to reach out for us just as we are. Our loved ones care for us. Yet we cannot believe the news is that good. We feel we must present something more than ourselves to God and to our sisters and brothers. In effect, we say, “If I can only produce enough I will be worthy of your love and acceptance.”

Consequently, while often claiming that all the “busyness” is for the sake of others, the workaholic will sacrifice the other facets of her life—family, close relationships, leisure, health, and if unchecked, life itself—to the job.

Even though workaholism is an addiction, psychologist Marilyn Machlowitz counters that it is not a self-destructive malady like alcoholism. Machlowitz holds that most of the workaholics she has researched have few of the psychological and social problems normally associated with other addictions.

Continued on next page

Getting the Job Done Right

Even so, Machlowitz warns of the problems workaholics can create for the people they live or work with. Especially if the workaholic is in a position of authority, she can be extremely disruptive in the work place. She will disdain others who do not place the organization above all else in their lives. She will feel an inordinate amount of responsibility for getting the job done right. She will expect of her subordinates work

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beyond their contract. She will expect more work, and a degree of perfectionism, beyond what the project warrants.

Co-workers and family of workaholics can be drawn into the role of co-dependents, affirming the workaholic's unrealistic expectations, covering for the confusion workaholics often cause, and helping to maintain a destructive situation.

Vice or Virtue?

Another difference between other addictions and workaholism is that our society tends to consider the former vices and the latter a virtue. Schaefer and Fassel, in *The Addictive Organization* (Harper and Row,

1988), suggest that our society itself is addictive, and therefore rewards workaholism. In their view, companies need, want, and promote workaholics.

Often for different reasons, the helping professions, and religious organizations in particular, may elevate workaholism to the position of a God-pleasing way of life. The pastor who is always available, the administrator who takes no account of his own needs, the volunteer who never says no become the definition of the word "dedicated." I once heard the head of a hospice describe the ideal staff person as one who can "give and give without ever having to use someone else to talk to about his own feelings."

In addition to being widespread, workaholism does not discriminate: both women and men experience it. However, women may have a different introduction to workaholism. Especially if a woman is new to work outside the home, she may think that organizational workaholism she observes is normal operating procedure and become addicted herself. Schaefer and Fassel point to studies showing that women are leaving companies to return to homemaking, or to begin their own businesses, because they feel helpless to change the addictive tendencies of their organizations.

Is It Me, Lord?

How do we know if we are workaholics? Is there a difference between workaholism and putting extra time into our work simply because we love it, or because we are working for an organization or cause whose goals we prize highly?

Workaholism exhibits similar symptoms as other addictions. In the workaholic, work controls her more than vice-versa. She must have

One difference between other addictions and workaholism is that our society tends to consider the former vices and the latter a virtue.

work to feel good and she must have work all the time to feel relatively good all the time.

The workaholic practices a great deal of denial about her preference for work over relationships and family. She is dishonest with herself and others about the role of work in her life. Activities billed as vacations, a night out or a friendly conversation will be laced with work brought home or with interrupting phone calls. She will initiate, or consistently consent to, an unrealistic schedule, even though it prohibits a healthy and balanced life.

Recovery

What does a person do about workaholism? As with the symptoms, suggestions for remedies draw on programs devised for recovery from other addictions.

The first and most difficult step, after we recognize a situation as addictive, is to acknowledge it as workaholism or co-dependency and recognize our lack of power to control it without outside help. Whether that outside help be God or another person or both, we need to get the secret out in the open and ask for help, a task particularly difficult for a workaholic.

Then comes the equally hard challenge of identifying which activities in our days and weeks are appropriate and which are a symptom of the addiction. Someone might say that

we cannot eliminate the addictive substance, as we would in the case of chemical dependency. For most of us, the work must go on. But remember that we are talking about an addictive process, not an addictive substance. The process, the style, can be replaced. The best resources for help are specialists in the fields of addiction.

Addictive Work/Healthy Work

A person can learn to distinguish between addictive work and healthy work. In her series of lectures printed under the title *To Work and to Love* (coauthored with Shirley A. Cloyes; Fortress Press, 1984), Dorothee Soelle helps the workaholic reclaim a balanced perspective on labor.

According to Soelle, healthy work is 1) a component of human dignity and 2) links a person with the community. How sharply dignity and community contrast with the subjection of life and alienation from the sister and brother inherent in addictive work!

The workaholic, the co-dependent, the addictive organization, or the addictive society, are no more inherently evil than any other perversion of the creation. However, they, or we, are participating in a perversion of work, an activity that God meant to be good and our Lord redeemed to be good.

ABOUT WOMEN

MARY LOU LINDER

Frances Chang

Frances Chang explains how she happened to grow up in Methodist parsonages in China. Her father had left home as a young man during the Chinese Revolution. At Nankin he was given a choice: become a soldier or a policeman. He became a policeman.

"As a rookie on the force, my father was given night duty. He was young and afraid in the big city. So, to keep away his fears, he would stand on the most brightly lit street corner on his beat and read—anything—very loudly. That corner happened to be where the Methodist Mission House was. One night, Bishop James came out and talked to my father, and the rest is history!"

A knee injury in 1937, just prior to World War II, kept Chang from going to college. She was sent to a hospital in the city of Wuhu for further treatment. She stayed on during the war, serving as an apprentice nurse.

An American officer volunteered financial help for nurse's training, in China or the United States. "I chose the U.S. and came here in 1947 to study midwifery, believing that would be most useful when I re-

turned to China. But it was more than 30 years before I was able to return. By the time I had my nursing degree, the Communists had taken China and it was impossible to go back."

Both her parents died in the early 1960s. It was not until 1987 that the five sisters and two brothers in the family could all be together. "Imagine! It had been 50 years since we had all been in one place. We were all alive. We were all well. We told stories from our childhood. We cooked. We sang the old Methodist hymns. It was wonderful."

Her more than 40 years in the United

States have been busy ones. Her first nursing job was in the nursery at Methodist Hospital in Cleveland. "That was before I could speak English well. I didn't have to talk to the babies!" She studied nursing as well as English at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland and graduated from there in 1952. She married twice and was widowed twice. At age 40 she was a first-time mother to her only child, a son who is now a computer scientist in Chicago. She continued to work as a nurse in her specialty, ob/gyn, and taught nursing



asses as well.

"All this time I was a Methodist, at times more active than other ones." She became a Lutheran by chance. "In 1983, one of my sisters and her husband were visiting me. Because my sister wanted to worship at a Chinese-speaking church, I took them to Chinese Lutheran Church in Skokie, which I had heard of. It was there that I met Pastor Paul Tang and his wife and learned of their work. I was impressed by their commitment. I felt needed. My bilingual skills could be helpful to non-English-speaking members. Soon, I joined the congregation."

In late 1987, Chinese Lutheran Church relocated. "We felt New Chinatown was a bigger pond—more fish to catch!" The congregation now rents the second floor of a commercial building on Argyle Street, a bustling Asian business area.

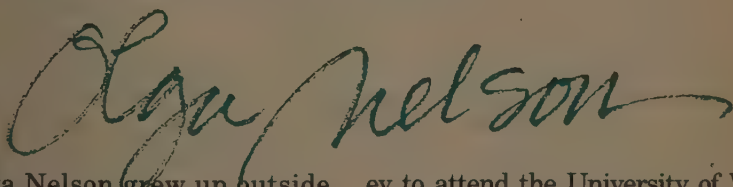
Seven days a week the congregation runs a small restaurant in part of their space. Diners find Chinese dishes on their tables as well as a

pamphlet describing the church's activities. The church offers English classes, Bible study, Sunday worship and a support network for Asians in the area.

Present membership is about 65, "some 50 percent Mandarin, people who came here from Taiwan or local old Chinese people. The other 50 percent are Vietnamese refugees. Many were 'boat people' who Pastor Tang helped to come to the States. Several now own stores in this area."

Frances Chang walks to the end of the wide hallway. "And this room is where we worship. You see the large Chinese characters in each of these many windows? They say 'For God so loved the world . . .'"

Picking up a small pamphlet, Chang says, "We will be distributing these on nearby street corners, after Sunday services, while we wait for the rice to be cooked upstairs for the meal we share on Sundays. A good way to use a half hour's time, don't you think?"



Olga Nelson grew up outside Waukegan, Wisconsin on her maternal grandmother's farm, with her father, sister and widowed mother. "My grandmother's values influenced me a great deal, and her hymn singing. I still sing those old hymns." Being a part of a Norwegian Lutheran country church that "always met their congregational dues" taught her something about witnessing: congregations need to reach out beyond themselves.

She worked in Chicago for two years after high school, saving mon-

ey to attend the University of Wisconsin at Madison, where she received an accounting degree. "But always I planned to return to Chicago. And I did, soon after graduation."

A women's Bible study group at First Lutheran on Fullerton Avenue in Chicago launched her into leadership in a variety of Lutheran groups. "Those women taught me that I could do more than I thought. I started by leading that Bible study. They supported me with prayers and encouragement. They urged me to accept the nomination to be secretary

of the American Lutheran Church Women conference."

Over the years, she's held various offices in women's groups. She's also a member of the Central Conference planning council of the ELCA's Metro Synod.

Today, Nelson serves as treasurer of Chicago's Metro Synod of Women of the ELCA. She continues to serve as elected treasurer of her congregation, Trinity Lutheran, in the Austin area of Chicago, where she and her husband Harold have been members for 25 years. She continues to do some income tax accounting work and spends five mornings a week at Trinity as church secretary.

Currently she is the editor of Trinity's *Messenger*, which has an enthusiastic following. "Members who move away send us postage to keep them on our mailing list. People say they see things in the *Messenger* they don't in other church publications.

"Church members need to be informed. Not just about dates for meetings. They need background, in-depth articles about issues, what the wider church is doing, opportunities to grow in faith, encouragement to be more involved. We've been using the newsletter as an evangelism tool for some time now too. Once canvassed, a household regularly receives the *Messenger*." It's a publication full of names. No matter the task, everyone gets thanked.

Twenty years ago the Austin community became integrated, and Trin-

ity did too. "We realized that if our church wasn't going to die out, we were going to have to change. We decided to stay here and concentrate our efforts on increasing membership." Today, Trinity's membership is nearly 45 percent black.

The Nelsons raised five children in the Austin area. "That was intentional; we wanted our children to grow up in an integrated community.

"I didn't work full-time in my professional area. We did without some of the extras, and that decision was intentional too. I was able to be highly involved in a number of volunteer activities, especially at church. Harold would take vacation days from work to stay with the children, so I could attend meetings and conventions. I would come back with renewed energy!

"I was more available for our children that way. And with so many moms working, I was the official 'block mother' in those days. Kids would look around at school activities and sports events to see if Mary Nelson was there. I was.


"Goals for the future? I can't really say I have any major ones. I will continue to do what I've always done: go where the Lord leads and serve however I am needed."

Mary Lou Linder, a former secondary school teacher, resource developer and publicist, is a freelance writer and designer from Oak Park, IL.



A LECTIONARY FOR THE CHRISTIAN PEOPLE

Ken Smith



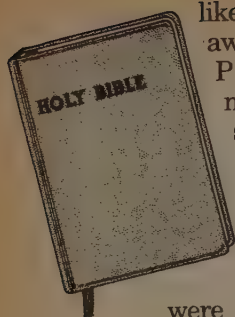
Pastor Susan Anderson sat down at her desk to read her mail on a fall Monday morning. It was her day off and the October sun was warm in a crisp sky. She would not be long. The mail was the usual: bills, advertisements for church products, notices and mailings from various organizations. She followed the path of morning light from the window to her desk. Beside the patch of sun on the desk top was her copy of *Lectionary for the Christian People*. She picked up the red book and began to thumb through the pages. The congregation had been using this translation of the lectionary for the Scripture lessons assigned to be read in church through the year for six months. She remem-

bered some of the words spoken from those lessons.

This lectionary, which updates the Revised Standard Version of Scripture, has been good for her and her people. For a long time she had been looking for a translation of Scripture which would use inclusive language, but which would not be an obvious or clumsy revision. She wanted people to listen to the Scripture and hear the meaning without being stopped by the language.

At a pastor's conference a year ago she stumbled across this lectionary translation and immediately sensed it was what she had been looking for. The *Lectionary for the Christian People* had managed to take out some unnecessarily masculine language while maintaining a translation to which people could relate.

But there were other things she



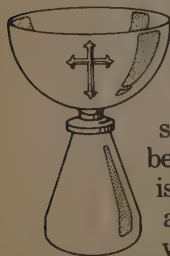
liked too. Many of the awkward phrases in Paul's letters were made more direct so that they were easier to listen to and understand.

Some of the worship committee members who were not at all excited about inclusive language had, as the committee read the texts, become interested in the new lectionary because they liked the new life found in many of the second (New Testament) lessons.



As the worship committee studied the lectionary, they became involved in it. They discovered how the lessons read on Sundays were assigned, how they related to the seasons of the church, how the readings on consecutive Sundays walked people through many books of the Bible, and how the themes of the first lesson (from the Old Testament) were echoed in the gospel lesson.

The committee, and many others in the congregation, had found something which focused their attention again on the reading of the Bible in church. Pastor Anderson reflected how much difference that had made in her preaching the last six months.



As she watched the sunlight drift across her desk, the pastor recalled the three pleasant surprises that had been a part of her parish's use of the lectionary. The first surprise was that several of

the lay readers who used the book discovered for themselves that Lutherans, Roman Catholics, and Episcopalians share the same lesson each Sunday, with only some differences. She was pleased to see some ecumenical awareness surface in the parish.

The second surprise came as the worship committee planned for Holy Week and discovered that the long lessons were set up as drama with a narrator. The committee decided to have one of those lessons read by several adults while the fourth-grade Sunday school class silently acted out the drama.

The third surprise came when one of the older members of the congregation



had purchased and brought her own copy of the lectionary to church every Sunday because she enjoyed reading the large print. She even told the pastor that the lectionary had become one of her

favorite devotional books.

As the pastor prepared to leave and enjoy her day off, she prayed and offered a quick prayer of Thanksgiving: for October days for her congregation, for the work of God. Go in peace, serve the Lord, she reminded herself. Thanks be to God.

The Rev. Ken Smith is the program specialist for ELCA Christian Education-Catechetics. Pastor Smith and his family have moved to the Chicago area from Madison, where he served as associate pastor at Midvale Lutheran Church.

lec•tion•ar•y

\ LEK•shə•ner•ē \ n:

a series of assigned
readings from the Bible
for use in worship.

The lectionary for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a three-year series of lessons which is outlined beginning on page 13 of *Lutheran Book of Worship*. *Lectionary for the Christian People*, an emended version of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, follows the assigned lessons as outlined in *LBW*. Note, for instance, the second lesson for the Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost, Romans 14:5-9:

Revised Standard Version

One man esteems one day as better than another, while another man esteems all days alike. Let every one be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. He also who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God; while he who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. None of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

Lectionary for the Christian People

One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own mind. The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one also who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, in giving thanks to God; while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

Lectionary for the Christian People; Cycles A & B (Gordon Lathrop and Ramsey Shaw-Schmidt, Eds., Pueblo Publishing Company and Fortress Press, 1986) are available through your nearest Augsburg Fortress location for \$15.00 per volume. Cycle C will be available soon. Bulletin inserts featuring the RSV emended version of this lectionary will be available from Augsburg Fortress beginning in Advent, 1988.—KS



How to Keep a Christian Journal

Rolland R. Ree

*K*eeping a journal may have been the difference between sanity and insanity for Anne Frank. The diary of this teenager, who hid from the Nazis in World War II, reveals how keeping a diary enabled her to maintain her emotional balance while being cramped into a "secret annex" for two years with seven other people. Without it she claims she would have been "absolutely stifled."

While few diaries, or journals, will capture the public's attention as Anne Frank's has, a select group of people know of another journal that has even more meaning to them than hers: their own. Five million diaries and blank books used as diaries are purchased each year. There is no way of estimating the additional number of people using notebooks, typewriters, tape recorders or word processors to create a diary.

Within this group exists a smaller,

specialized group of Christian journalers. They record the ups and downs of their spiritual pilgrimage for their own sake, and sometimes for the sake of others. They are convinced this discipline enables them to know themselves better, and more important, helps them to know their God better. The Christian journaler starts with the assumption that God, as revealed in Jesus Christ, is the source of all life's movement and meaning. God's hand shapes all things, including—if particularly giving form to—a journal.

There are many reasons for keeping a journal. Some people want an accurate historical record. Others simply enjoy writing. A number of journalers write only when a long or dramatic journey is undertaken. Some make their journal their best friend, while others use their jour-

in times of great stress or travel. Writing a problem on paper enables the writers to gain control of it. Many journal writers seek self-knowledge, for they sense this is the first step in bringing about change within themselves. What better way to come to know oneself than through a journal?

For Christians a journal may re-enact the long pilgrimage that brings the believer closer and closer to God. Sometimes it tells of falling back and losing sight of God. Then, again, it may reveal a sudden leap forward to a new intimacy with God.

My 1967 journal describes how I stated—in fact insisted upon—the value of my childhood rescuing me. Hoping for him, however, was like stepping on a rock in a fast moving stream, that turns out to be leaves caught in the fork of a rotten branch.” In late summer of 1982 I wrote, “I trust you, because you are God. After these years I still wince at the very mention of submission.” Then in the fall of 1985 I recorded, “. . . a few years ago, I began to believe that submission to you [God] is my only way to freedom.” A long and painful struggle was being put to rest.

Since no two lives are alike, no two journals are alike. However, certain guidelines may have relevance for nearly all journalists. Here are some suggestions I follow and recommend to would-be journalers:

Choose when and where and how often you will write.

Select the location that is most free of distractions. Keep going to that location at the same time until this practice becomes an established habit. Plan on investing at least a half

hour with your journal each time you write. At the outset it is important to write in your journal five times a week. This will enable you to get a “feel” for how your life moves.

Select the kind of journal that will best serve you.

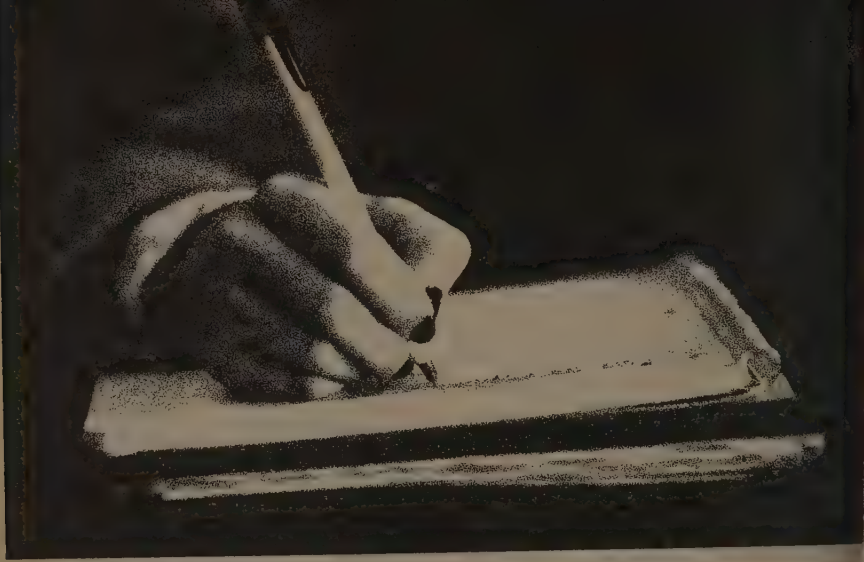
Your friend may use a blank book, because it is so sturdy and portable. Another may choose to bang out her or his pilgrimage on a typewriter or word processor. Still another may use a tape recorder. I like a loose-leaf, three-ring notebook. It offers intriguing flexibility. Pictures, articles, and letters can be added with one simple stroke of a three-hole punch. You may choose for your journal something entirely different from anything mentioned here. What is important is what works for you.

Resist the impulse to edit what you write.

Your journal is not a manuscript. It is your life, and your life is likely not made up of nicely structured sentences and well-rounded paragraphs. Put your life on the page the way it comes to you. Content is everything. Grammar and style can best be left for another day.

Write your journal for yourself.

When you think of others reading your journal, the temptation to edit it, to clean up the raw emotion, or to add a conciliatory phrase is nearly ir-



resistible. Subtly the journal will then be written to be read. Slowly it will no longer be a haven where you can be yourself without restriction.

Be honest and specific.

Write accurately and with as sharp a focus as you can. To write, for example, "certain kinds of people tend to annoy me," is a blob of thought that will have little meaning a year from now. To write that sentence honestly and with focus, it may read, "Carl makes me angry when he teases me about my weight." That sentence will be clear five years from now. Furthermore, if your goals include making changes in your life, you can make some very practical changes in your relationship with Carl. It's very hard to change a relationship with an ambiguous grouping of "certain kinds of people."

Be objective.

Describe, do not judge or interpret yourself. Recording all behaviors and

feelings without judgment is exceedingly difficult to do. Christians, characteristically, are often ready with admonitions and moralism. If you judge yourself, "I was wrong to be angry at Carl," you will have a record of who you should be, rather than who you are. When trigger words appear such as *should*, *must*, *ought*, *have*, you are no longer writing from inside yourself, but you have stepped back and are writing about yourself, filtered through an outside point of view.

Accept the self you describe in your journal.

Jesus Christ has. The goal in achieving self-knowledge is to write who you are without praise or blame. Why would you want to accept the prickly pear you are? Because it is also the beginning point in making change possible.

Honesty, objectivity and self-acceptance create the fertile soil in which a journal comes alive. None of these goals is totally achievable.

For Christians a journal may record the long pilgrimage that brings the believer closer and closer to God.



With patient practice they will enable you to know yourself better and trace your life's developments.

Is there ever a time you look at your journal from the viewpoint of the Christian faith? Yes, after you lay your pencil down.

I read the Scriptures and pray before writing in my journal. This reminds me who the source of my life is and empowers me to cast off some of the clutter of my busyness and be in touch with the movement—the time mover—of my life. Here is reality for the Christian, for in God we live and move and have our being . . ." (Acts 17:28 RSV). Therefore, be aware that God is intimately involved in the journal process.

Laying your pencil down, you begin to read your journal from the viewpoint of Jesus Christ. A rewarding practice is to let the entries collect for several weeks (sometimes months) before rereading. This sep-

aration in time permits you to become less protective and more open to how Christ wants to give you life more abundant, and to "grow in faith and mission."

To enhance this positive outcome, bring to your rereading an assumption. Assume that God was present when you made your entries, and therefore confidently look for God's traces in the movement of your life. Sometimes you'll find, in rereading, what you have been looking for over a long stretch of time.

I am goal-oriented. As a result, I sometimes "push" what I'm rereading in my journal to make the meaning come out a certain way. But I've discovered that making things "come out right" isn't nearly as rewarding as "being right" with God. Reread your journal observantly and you will discover how you are led into a right relationship with God.

Holistic Health

Have you ever thought about how much time and money our society spends treating illness, crisis, and disability, and how little we consider preventing these things from happening in the first place? Do you find yourself worrying about illness rather than embracing habits that promote wellness? Have you ever noticed the powerful insights and courage that illness often facilitates in those who have been afflicted? These questions are at the heart of a major change in perspective in today's health-care system.

The new perspective has been referred to by many as "the holistic health movement." It contains assumptions about disease and patient care as well as health and life-style.

As with most new ideas, holistic health has different meanings for different people. Some view it as an an-

swer to basic problems in health care today. Others are afraid of the major changes that it may bring. We can understand the impact of the holistic health movement on our lives by looking at differences between this approach to health and the more traditional medical model.

The words "holistic" and "wholistic" originate from the Greek word *holos*, meaning the whole is greater

than the sum of its parts. A person, in the holistic sense, is more than a combined nervous system, cardiovascular system, skeletal framework, etc.

Holism looks at the psychological, cultural and spiritual dimensions of persons as well as the physical one. The focus of holistic health is on the integrations, harmony and balance of body, mind and spirit rather than on the diagnosis of a disease. In the holistic approach, typical treatment

The focus of holistic health is on the integrations, harmony and balance of body, mind and spirit rather than on the diagnosis of a disease.

measures such as radiology, medications, and surgery are complimented by the use of what are called noninvasive techniques—relaxation, massage, chiropractic, osteopathy, biofeedback, imagery, and the like.

From the holistic perspective, the patient's family and health-care practitioners are responsible partners in

the process of healing. Instead of being passive followers of orders, patients are encouraged to maintain as much control as possible over their care and treatment. Instead of being authority figures who direct and order care, health practitioners are therapeutic partners who facilitate healing through listening and caring, as well as technical skills.

The holistic perspective also embraces God's grace. When we are ill we feel more vulnerable and thus become more aware of our need for Christ's love. Through such awareness, we open ourselves more fully to the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 3:16-17 reminds us "... that God will give us inner strength as Christ dwells in us through faith" (author paraphrase).

It is often when we are most broken and afraid that we cease to take our health and our lives for granted and become aware of God's grace in our lives. Illness is a part of life; it can be an opportunity for spiritual growth. When we look at health in terms of spirituality and inner strength, illness often appears as a

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tap on the shoulder, a reminder that we need to pay attention to some aspect of our life, and make changes.

Health is a beautiful gift from God. It is our responsibility to take care of that gift, to nurture it, to enhance it, and in so doing to become better able to reach out to others. Dr. Leonard Sagan, in his book *The Health of Na-*

tions (Basic Books, 1987) discovered through an examination of historical, epidemiological, and sociological studies in health care that the way we choose to live our lives, the cohesiveness of our family and community, and our openness to learning have a great deal to do with our health—even more so than environment, nutrition, and modern medical care.

The holistic health movement has opened up new doors for exploration in science. But it also challenges you and me to become active and educated participants in our own health and the health of our loved ones. We are challenged to grow through our experiences with illness, for wholeness can be present in illness as well as in wellness. We are challenged to embrace wholeness as a gift from a loving God.

"God's Answer to My Prayer"

BETTY STEVENS

T

o meet Carole Peterson is to be reminded of the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's purpose statement. [See

page 7, this issue.] She personifies those words.

She speaks easily of a God who communicates with her and a church that supports her, regardless of whether she is a wife, mother, church and community leader, as she once was—or a single mother, less involved in church and community leadership and a full-time student, as she is now.

Married to a local farmer for 23 years, their separation was long and painful. To support herself and her children, she turned to what she knew best, and also liked to do: clean houses for other people.

She soon had 20 clients, each of whom paid her \$8.00 per hour, good wages for rural Nebraska. In the past two years, she had given 200 hours as a hospice volunteer. She also enrolled in Kearney State College and remains full-time mother to Drew, 18; Leah, 15; and Lans, 7.

The load became unbelievably heavy. "I was crying all the time. I knew I had to choose between working and school."

Then two things happened that helped her focus her energy.

Another woman she knew who also cleaned houses developed back trouble that forced her to leave her work. "I began to think I'd better be developing my brain as well as my brawn," Peterson, 42, said.

At just about that time, she received word that she would receive Women of the ELCA \$1,500 scholarship for the 1987-88 school year. "That was God's answer to my prayer," she said.

It was a fellow church member at Bethel Lutheran Church, Dr. Stuart Embury, who first called Peterson's attention to the availability of the scholarship for mature Lutheran women in financial need.

And it was Embury's wife, Lynn, who urged her to apply and who helped her in other ways, such as tutoring her through a tough physiology class.

"But there are so many supportive people in my church who have helped me make it, like my pastor, Ralph Strand, and my ment

Mary Ann Anderson."

"Leah is really putting me through college. She does most of the cleaning, babysits Lans and does the worrying for all of us."

Peterson, who has just received her second \$1,500 scholarship from Women of the ELCA, has also received other help. Her parents bought her a house in town, a car (it is 35 miles to the Kearney State campus), and have helped with miscellaneous expenses. Her former husband pays child support for Leah and Lans. She has had some small scholarships from both the local and state extension councils.

A convert to Lutheranism, Peterson plays the piano each week for Sunday school. A couples group that she and her former husband attended now encompasses singles and she remains active in that group. She is on-call as a van driver to pick up elderly parishioners for worship services and serves as cradle roll secretary, sending out materials to children from infancy through three-year-olds.

Her real love, however, is doing what weekly runs on garage sales, where she purchases infant shirts, diapers and receiving blankets. She launders them and packages them in layettes for Lutheran World Relief.

"I assembled 30 last year! I really love that project," Peterson said,

pointing to the front hall closet stacked from floor to ceiling with grocery sacks of infant clothing.

At the time of this interview Peterson was carrying nine credit hours in summer school, leaving home each day at 6:30 A.M. She had 85 people over for an open house the week before to celebrate Drew's high school graduation. The house was full of good food smells for the following day's celebration of Leah's confirmation. "I love to entertain," Peterson commented.

The Petersons' three-bedroom house has a finished basement with another bedroom and bath. To help with expenses, she rents that bedroom, on a nightly basis, to people who have family mem-

bers hospitalized nearby.

Peterson's academic goal is to graduate in 1990. Her major is social work and her minor is gerontology. "I have a natural affinity for the elderly. They are my favorites," she said.

"Time management is a big factor in my life," Peterson said, "and with the help of God and the support of loving people, it all works."

Betty Stevens is outstate reporter and photographer for the Journal Star in Lincoln, NE. Previously she served as religion page editor for the Lincoln Star and Lincoln Journal.



"I began to think I'd better be developing my brain as well as my brawn."

Announcing Scholarships and Grants

Each year Women of the ELCA scholarship and grants programs offer interest income from certain endowment funds to be used for continuing education and for programs developing human resources. Individuals applying for scholarships and agencies/organizations applying for grants, please note the respective criteria listed below.

For Scholarships...

■ Women of the ELCA scholarships are for mature women, that is, lay-women who for a number of years have been out of school, employed in the work force, or engaged as homemakers, and who are returning to school for vocational, academic training, or degrees. Young women who have continued directly through high school and college are not eligible.

■ Scholarships are not available to women studying for ordination, diaconate, or church certified professions, since these areas of support are the responsibility of the ELCA.

■ Awards given take into account scholastic ability, financial need, educational goals, and Christian commitment of applicants.

■ Deadline for complete application to be received, including all references, is **February 15, 1989**—except for a complete IRS 1040 form which is due on March 1 (This form must be a copy of the forms sent to the IRS, including signature).

■ Recipients of previous scholarships may reapply. However, no applicant is eligible for scholarships for more than two years.

■ Women of the ELCA must receive all the items on the checklist sent with the application.

■ Some academic record, such as course beyond high school, is recommended for applicants.

■ Admission to an institution must be confirmed in writing before award of monies is given.

■ Notification of change in education plans (for instance, withdrawing from class or failing a course) must be given to the Women of the ELCA.

■ **Send application, including all background documentation to: Scholarships, Betty Lee Nyhus, Executive Director, Women of the ELCA, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631.**

For Grants...

Money available from the Fund for the Development of Human Resources is to assist individual(s) or groups(s) for whom use of the grant will have an expanding or multiplier effect by:

■ Supplementing currently available resources;

■ Initiating a new project;

■ Providing seed money, which when used with other monies (such as government funds) will initiate a project and meet emergency situations.

Grants will not be given to requests involving rental or purchase of land and buildings.

■ The plan of the program or project of the individual(s) or group(s) should be one in which Women of the ELCA should or can be properly involved.

■ Priority will be given to persons of color or persons whose primary language is other than English, or to individuals and/or group(s) whose requests are related to poverty situations, or to the crises in urban and rural situations.

■ **Deadline for application is February 15, 1989.**

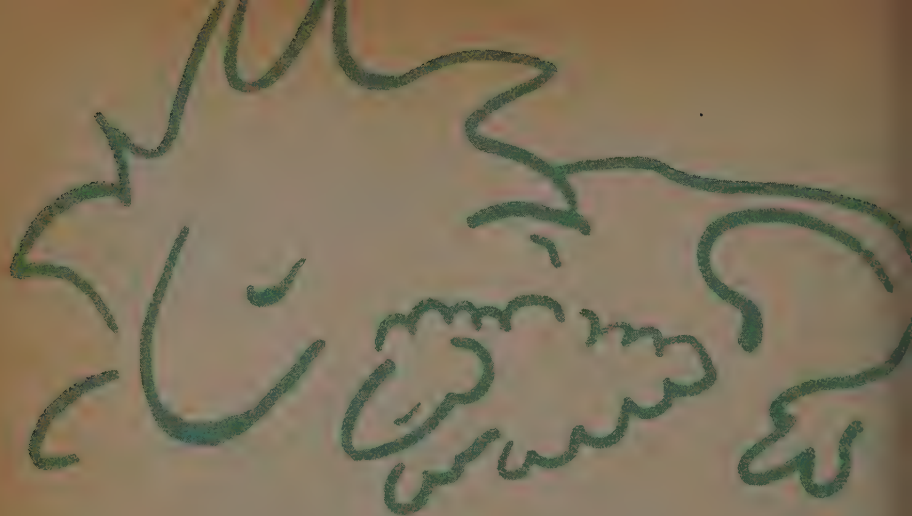
■ Recipients of grant awards must give periodic reports to Women of the ELCA on progress and use of grants. If plans of recipients do not materialize, funds are to be returned to Women of the ELCA.

■ In past years grants have been awarded in amounts ranging from several hundred to several thousand dollars.

■ Recipients of previous grants may reapply. However, no recipient is eligible for more than three grants in a ten-year period.

■ **Send application to: Grants, Betty Lee Nyhus, Executive Director, Women of the ELCA, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631.**

Look for an article in a future issue of LWT on a grants recipient.—Ed.



PEACE WITH JUSTICE WEEK OCTOBER 14-24, 1988

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America joins over 40 other religious organizations and faith communities in inviting its people to celebrate Peace with Justice Week, October 14-24. This year's theme, based on Isaiah 58:6-10, asks, "Is This the Fast We Choose?"

How might you, your church, your community choose to worship God by celebrating the week? What creative efforts might promote peace with justice? In the past six years, communities have held racism awareness seminars, crop walks, candidate forums, voter registration drives, World Food Day and World Disarmament Day rallies, and ecumenical worship and witness—all under the umbrella of Peace with Justice Week.

This year, which marks the 20th anniversary of the death of Martin Luther King Jr. and the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is an especially appropriate time for Christians to recommit themselves to fight against

racism and to promote social justice.

The Women of the ELCA will use the week to highlight their ongoing commitment to literacy, health, housing and peacemaking issues, the Ecumenical Decade for Women, and justice concerns in Central America and Namibia. Local efforts will lift up these issues and other issues of injustice specific to each community.

For more information, contact the Women of the ELCA through a local mission: action leader, peace with justice coordinator, or the church-wide office at 1-800-638-3522, extension 2746. Information and promotional materials are also available from the National Council of Churches/Peace with Justice Week Office at (212) 870-3347.

The meditation on the next page reflects on Isaiah 58:6-10, the scripture basis for this year's Peace with Justice Week. As an offering meditation, it can be read aloud by two readers, or as a group divided into two sections.

OFFERING MEDITATION

ISAIAH 58:6-10 PEACE WITH JUSTICE WEEK OCTOBER 14-24, 1988

GROUP 1: What is the fast God would have us choose? Is it to bow down our heads like a rush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under us? Does God call this a fast, a day that is acceptable to the Lord?

GROUP 2: Rather this is the fast desired by God: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke.

GROUP 1: To share our bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor to our house; when we see them naked, to cover them, and not hide ourselves from our own.

GROUP 2: We must take away from our midst the yoke, the pointing of the finger, and the spreading of wickedness.

GROUP 1: We must pour ourselves out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted.

GROUP 2: Then our light will break forth like the dawn, and our healing will spring up speedily.

GROUP 1: Then when we call, the Lord will answer. Then when we cry, God will say, "Here I Am."

GROUP 2: O Lord, we worship you. We pray long prayers for healing, yet the problems of the world remain and worsen. What should we do, Lord? What is the fast we should choose?

GROUP 1: We see war, oppression and militarism; help us choose peace.

GROUP 2: We see the evils of racism in ourselves and our institutions; help us choose justice.

GROUP 1: We see homelessness, we see hunger; help us choose to share our abundance.

GROUP 2: We see pollution and destruction; help us choose to restore the integrity and wholeness of your creation.

L (in prayer): *Help us, Lord, to worship you with understanding, commitment and action. You call us to choose peace. You call us to choose justice. You call us to choose the integrity of creation. You ask us to fast—to worship you—not with solemn faces and in sackcloth and ashes, but at the polls, in the streets, in our world. Guide us, Lord. Help us speed your healing. May the fast we choose be acceptable to you. When we call, you will answer. When we pray, you will be there. Amen.*

OCTOBER

Editor's Notes

En la iglesia, reads the Spanish version of the last line in the Women of the ELCA purpose statement. *In the church*, echo those of us who render it in English.

Whatever the language, these three small words carry a powerful message about one way in which God's people carry out the ministry entrusted to them: They do so *in the church*.

That means, some of our writers tell us, that we are never so busy ministering to people "out there" that we forget to love, nurture and support those sisters and brothers in the faith who are nearest us. The clarion call to love "in the church" needs to be heard especially as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America struggles to take shape. We may laugh over Bertha von Craigh's example of separate cupboards for women's groups' dishes, but we should also wince in pain over barriers that we erect in the community of Christ.

Gloria Espeseth, in "Forum," reminds us eloquently of the need for constant conversion "in the church" as she asks, with Peter, "When God moves, who can stand in the way?"

The joys and woes of finding a new church home come in for comment by two writers; their insights remind those of us in the church of the role we all have in creating an "inviting church" (See review, page 12).

Some writers also note the need for change and growth. Are we willing to receive help, not only giving

1 Women of the ELCA International
Exchange Visit Planning
Sept. 27-Oct. 10

2 World Communion Sunday
American Mission Sunday

3 Lutheran women pray, noon

4

5

6

7

8

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10 Lutheran women pray, noon

11

12

13

14 Peace with Justice Days
(October 14-24)

15

16 World Food Day

17 Lutheran women pray, noon

18

19

20

21

22

23 World Community Sunday

24 United Nations Day
Lutheran women pray, noon

25

26

27

28

29

30 Reformation Sunday

31 Reformation Day, All Saints' Eve
Lutheran women pray, noon

Might a new lectionary (page 33) enrich our worship? Is workaholicism an especially seductive problem to ward against "in the church"?

Woven through the comments in this issue about the church is the overarching theme of unity in diversity, a thread best depicted in the image of a tapestry. The front cover of this issue says it well—without words. The loving hands that created the nearly 11,000 fabrics of the tapestry herald the same message: We want to be attached. Together we are greater than the sum of our parts.

Artist Richard Caemmerer, who designed the hanging that now brightens a wall in the ELCA Chicago offices, said he felt so many people contributed to the tapestry because it helped them feel they were participating in the church. This project makes it seem that each niche in the whole makes a difference and that it is visible." Our prayer is, ever, that the church be visible in this world and that its presence make a difference.

Nancy J. Stelling

EDITOR

International Exchange Lit Consultation

On September 27 to October 10, the Women of the ELCA Chicago will host several women from overseas who will help plan future international exchange visits. Ask for information about the exchange program in a future LWT.

PREVIEW

IN THE SOCIETY

God's people are also active "in the society." Judith Kowalski looks at how different, and similar, that is to ministry "in the church."

SUSAN FROM MUNCIE MEETS VERA FROM

ROSTOV A conversation about Orthodoxy and 1000 years of Christianity in the USSR.

THROUGH THE BIBLE IN A YEAR

Learn about a special program for those who want to read the Bible in its entirety.

CHURCHES AND COPYRIGHTS

Some practical guidelines for learning how to, and how not to, use copyrighted materials in the church.

THE TEARING OF THE CURTAIN

The Mark Bible study looks at the trial and crucifixion of Jesus.

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